AVBREYS SCRIPTURE PROPHECIES 1647

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Scripture-Prophecies OPENED,

Which are to be accompliſhed in theſe laſt times, which do attend the ſecond coming of Chriſt;

In ſeveral LETTERS

Written to Chriſtian friends,

BY

E. Avery.

ISAI. 29 17,18,19.

Is it not a very little while, and Lebanon ſhall be turned into a fruitful field, and the fruitful field ſhall be eſteemed as a foreſt? And in that day ſhall the deaf hear the words of the book, and the eyes of the blinde ſhall ſee out of obſcurity and darkneſſe. The meek alſo ſhall increaſe their joy in the Lord, and the poor among men ſhall rejoyce in the holy One of Iſrael.

LONDON,
Printed for *Giles Calvert*, at the ſigne of the black ſpread-Eagle at the Weſt-end of *Pauls*. 1647.

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To the Reader.

Christian Reader,

THese following Letters were intended onely for some particular Christians: but seeing that which is contained in them is of general concernment, I do here present it to the view of all; and the rather, because the power of God doth appear in it in respect of the weakness and contemptibleness of the instrument whom he doth here employ; as formerly it hath been his course in doing great things by weakest means, and so by such foolishness he doth bring to nought the wisdom of the wise, that so no flesh may glory in his presence. And as it hath been the manner of God's proceedings heretofore, so likewise I finde the immediate acting of the Spirit in giving in, and so accordingly in carrying me forth to communicate it to others. And seeing it is thus, I dare not conceal it in oblivion, but I must hold it forth to the view of the whole world, not fearing any thing in way of opposition from the creature: for I fear not the prison, having such enlargements in God: I fear not reproach; for I can wear it as my Crown: I fear

not want, in that I do enjoy all in God: And though I may be counted mad to the world, I shall speak the words of soberness: and if I am mad, as the Apostle saith, it is to God; and if I am in my right mind, it is for the benefit of others. And I desire likewise that the Christian Reader should know, though I question not the truth of that which I do here hold forth, yet I am resolved not to contend for it with carnal weapons, as by Argument, but rather I shall witness the truth of it with my Blood, if God shall call me to it: for I have nothing to do, but to hold it forth, and so I must leave it to God, who I know will witness to his own Truth, and reveal it unto all his in his good time: in the mean while, so far as we have attained, let us walk by the same rule, and minde the same thing, and accordingly wait for further discoveries.

And so I shall leave thee (good Reader) to the manifestation of Christ in thy flesh, which doth begin to appear in some, and we do likewise expect it in general unto all the Saints, when God shall bring them out of darkness into his marvellous light; which is begun, and shall increase until it be perfect day. And with this I shall close up, committing thee to God, and to the power of his grace, ever remaining

Thine in Christ,

Elizabeth Avery.

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Christian

Christian Letters.

The First,

Opening the Mystery of the state and fall of

BABYLON.

Dear Friend,

SEeing it is the greatest joy of the Saints to have communion one with another in the Spirit, though distant in the Flesh; which joy is much improved, when the Lord doth carry us forth in communicating one unto another that which he is pleased to reveal unto us by his Spirit: And here by the providence of God I am come forth to act in this kinde: So in the first place I shall speak of *Babylon*, as it is that vail of Darkneſſe which covers all flesh, *Isa.* 25. 7. which God will shortly take away from all his Saints: but at present this vail covers all flesh more then ever, and Antichrist the spirit of Errour doth reside in the flesh more then ever, even in the Saints themselves as well as o-

thers; and so it shall be, till God is manifested in the flesh of the Saints, as he was in the Humanity of Christ: and such a one in whom God shall be thus manifested, *shall confesse that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh*, 1 *Joh.*4.3. and when it is thus with any, in such a one Babylon and Antichrist is fallen. But at the present, Babylon and Antichrist is fallen in a very inconsiderable number of the Saints, who are enlightned with the light of Truth; and these are the Watchmen that shall declare glad tidings, *Isa.*51.14,15,16. and 52.7,8. But howsoever Babylon and Antichrist, which is Confusion and Errour, doth remain in the generality of mankinde, yea the Saints themselves, I say, That Babylon and Antichrist is over all States which govern by an Arbitrary power, and over all Churches, whether National or others, and all Worships, whether the Worship of the Heathens, or Antichristian Worship, that comprehends all; which hath formerly been understood to be the Worship of the Papists, but we have found it otherwise: and not onely is Confusion and Errour in all false Worship, but Babylon is in the purest Worship, that is most agreeable to the letter of the Word, because the Saints have no rule for what they practise in taking up the Ordinance, never since the defection from the faith: for though the Apostle speaks of a falling away, yet he never speaks of the restauration of the Truth in the same form of Worship which at the first was given forth. And so we must look for new discoveries, such as have not been yet, as the Prophet speaks, *The things that have not been, shall be told you*: and the Apostle *Peter* speaking unto the Saints in general, and in them he spake to us, whom it doth more immediately concern, even we which live in this age, wherein the Prophecies are to be accomplished in a spiritual sense; the Apostle *Peter* says (2 *Pet.* 1. the three last verses) *You have a more sure Word of prophecie, to which you shall do well to give heed, as unto a light shining in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the day-star arise in your hearts.* Now Babylon, you see, is not onely the Church of *Rome*, which doth appear to all that are enlightned to be so, because their Religion consists of so many particulars, which

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is needleſſe for me to recite, being ſo well known to all: but Babylon doth more myſtically appear to be in this preſent State and Church of *England*. I put them together, becauſe they are ſo involved, that they make but one Beaſt, which is the ſecond Beaſt ſpoken *Revel.* 13. 11. which is diſtinct from the Beaſt that roſe out of the Sea, who had power given him over Kinreds, Tongues and Nations. But howſoever, though that Beaſt that did riſe out of the ſea did riſe firſt, and ſo did act according to his power in the firſt place, yet ſure Babylon falls firſt in this glorious State and Church of *England*, which may well be underſtood to be the feet and toes of the great Image ſpoken of *Dan.* 2. 34. which are different from the legs, which are altogether of Iron, which did ſhew the great ſtrength of the Roman Monarchy.

But here it may be objected, That *this glorious Church and State of England hath appeared to be a golden cup in the Lords hand*, Jer. 51. 7. *in reſpect of the Spiritual excellencies which have been ſeen in her; and therefore how can it be compared to the feet and toes of the great Image, which is the meaneſt part of the body?*

To this I anſwer, Though the feet and toes are the meaneſt part of the body; yet it will appear that there are more excellencies in them then the head of gold: for though the feet and toes be thus mixt, part of Potters clay, and part of Iron, which ſhews that the Kingdom is partly weak and partly ſtrong; but though this part be not ſtrong by reaſon of the mixture, yet I ſay there is more excellency in this mixture, then in the head of Gold: for it is ſaid of this State, that they did mix themſelves with the ſeed of men, which is a great myſtery: And ſo though Babylon may be in all manner of Profeſſions, and all States who govern in an arbitrary way, yet I may boldly ſay, that Babylon, concerning whoſe deſtruction the Prophets of old and *John* in the *Revelation* ſpeak, that ſpiritual Babylon as it is a State and Church, and myſtically Babylon in our gathered Churches, and Antichriſt rendered in a myſtery in the Saints; all which, out of queſtion, is to be accompliſhed in this Iſland of *Great Britain*, which

by the learned is made evidently to appear to be the tenth part of the *great City, which is spiritually called Sodom and Egypt, where also our Lord was crucified,* Revel. 11.13. that falls first. Now if this can be proved, as very probably it can, that this State and National Church of *England* be Babylon, then I pray take notice of that which the Lord speaks, *Jerem.* 51.49. that *as Babylon caused the slain of Israel to fall, so at Babylon shall fall the slain of all the earth.* Not that all the earth shall be slain with a temporal sword, but the earth is slain in a spiritual sense: for natural Babylon did not slay Israel in the flesh; for the Prophet *Jeremiah* and other of the Saints had good usage in Babylon: And a slaughter to be slain in this sense as here it is spoken, it is to be slain by following their wicked ways, in being led in Errour, and so slain by their sin. And sure natural Babylon did never use such cruelty on the Saints as the Scripture speaks of; onely on some which were not Saints, but the enemies of God, which did go contrary to his command in rebelling against the King of Babylon, unto whom the Lord had given commandment by *Jeremiah* the Prophet, that they should subject themselves unto his yoke. And so whereas it is said that Babylon did cause the slain of Israel to fall, it's Babylon in the Saints, that is, Confusion and Errour have slain the Saints in a spiritual sense: as the Lord says concerning his people, that they were slain by their iniquity; as in *Hos.* 13. it is said, that *the iniquity of Ephraim is bound up, and his sin is hid:* but when it did appear, see what follows, even the sorrows of a travelling woman, and death it self. Now this is Babylons causing the slain of Israel to fall. So Babylon causeth the slain of Israel to fall by her false teachings, as in *Isai.* 9.13. *Jerem.* 51. 5, and so forward; again, *vers.* 25 of the same Chapter; which shews how Babel did destroy the people of God by their false teachings. Again, Babylon causeth the slain of Israel to fall, by her cruel hatred, and most deceitful usage, and by her vile reproaches, by which she slays the people of God with the sword of the heart, and with the sword of the tongue, concerning the nature of which, is fully made forth in *Psal.* 11. So, as Babylon

lon hath caused the slain of Israel to fall, so at Babylon shall fall the slain of all the earth, which is flesh in the Saints, when the Lord hath judged with fire and the sword all flesh, as in *Isai.* 9.5. and 66.16. *Revel.* 19.10. Now though sinful flesh be slain in the Saints whilst they are in Babylon, yet this is not done till we are slain by Babylon, and so have attained unto a resurrection with Christ, as in *Isa.* 26.19 20, 21. I pray take notice of this Scripture; for it makes forth clearly that state of the Church which hath been or shall be slain by Babylon, and risen with Christ, being secured in that chamber here spoken of in respect of the spiritual man, in that there is no more sin, nor hell, nor death; though hell and death remains in the flesh as yet, insomuch that we have cause to cry out with the Apostle, *O wretched men that we are, who shall deliver us from this body of death?* But now the Lord is come into his temple in many of the Saints, though we have a being as yet in Babylon, amongst the dens of lions, and the mountains of the leopards: but though the Lord is come into his temple, even the Messenger of the Covenant, in whom we delight; yet it is said, (*Mal.* 3.1, [2, 3.]) *Who can abide his coming, and who shall stand when he appeareth? what flesh can endure his presence?* Flesh must die, when God appeareth in it. So God sits in his temple to destroy sinful flesh in his Saints, which is done even here, whilst we have our being in this strange land, amongst our cruel enemies: But when the Lord hath accomplished his work on *mount Sion*, which he will effect by the cruelty of the inhabitants of Caldea, to the mortifying of the flesh in the Saints, then the Lord will visit the proud heart of the King of Babel, and gather all his from among the Heathen, and so give rest unto his people, and disquiet the inhabitants of Babylon.

Now I shall sum up in brief the particulars of the fall of Babylon, which is begun in some, and shall be accomplished in all, even in this Island of *Great Britain*.

In the first place,

Babylon is fallen in a very inconsiderable part of the Saints,

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even in the least number; but in a spritual sense it is fallen in the least number: so when Babylon was thus fallen in them, Light did appear, in that they had brought forth a man-childe spoken of *Rev.* 12. 1,2. *Isai.* 9. and 66. which man-childe is understood in the first place to be onely the glorious manifestations of God in the flesh of that number of Saints in whom he doth appear. Now when God doth thus appear in any, then that dragon which of late hath made *war in heaven*, Rev. 12. who did not prevail because *Michael* did withstand him; I say, when that dragon was cast to the earth, even that glorious State which is now come to confusion, and so he saw his power, he did presently begin to persecute that part of the Church who did represent the woman which had brought forth a man-childe; but the woman had fled into the wilderness, where she is kept, as is spoken of in the Scripture: which wilderness, in a spiritual sense, is onely that place of safety in which the spiritual man doth reside, which is God himself, who does manifest his presence most unto his Saints in their desolate and disconsolate condition; and the Saints live more in God in the want of all help and comfort from the creature, then in the enjoyment of all. But though that part of the Church is secured in that place, which is God, in respect of the spiritual man: yet as she is in the flesh, she is in Babylon, amongst her hateful enemies, who have procured the greatest evil unto themselves in persecuting of the Saints. In that the violences done unto us, unto our flesh, be on Babylon, shall the inhabitants of Sion say, not onely in that which God hath done already in the fall of this glorious State and Church, which shall never be rebuilt again; but our blood be on the inhabitants of Caldea, shall Jerusalem say. Now here we may see the fall of Babylon, whose fall is first in an inconsiderable part of the Saints; and when it is in any, light doth appear, and you know the Prince of darkness hates the light, so as they hate the light; they persecute them in whom God doth appear, and in persecuting them, they dash themselves against the rocks, and so are broken: and sure the stone that is cut out of the mountain without hands, shall fall on all

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the enemies of God, and grinde them to powder, even as Babylon is fallen in some of the Saints, and fallen in the State and National Church of *Great Britain*, which out of doubt is the great part of the tenth City spoken of *Revel.*10. so Babylon shall fall in all gathered Churches, and in all the Saints shortly; and so not onely shall the stone break the feet of the great Image, but when the feet are broken, then all falls with it, the gold and silver, which is the truth it self that is held forth in Babylon; *Howsoever truth shall return from the land of the enemy*, as *Jerem.* 31. and *the fire shall try every man his work*: and we know that gold and silver shall abide the trying and refining, and so truth shall be tried, and appear to be truth; the Saints themselves shall be tried, and appear to be Saints: so in this fall and refining the Truth loseth nothing but its drosse, and the Saints nothing but their corruption; and when this is done, the whole body shall go out of Babylon, and flee out of the land of the Caldeans, with a voice of singing, *Isa.*48. 20,21. When we shall trust God in a wilderness-condition in respect of temporals, having so good experience of his supplying us in spirituals; so assuredly, as God hath already, and will gather all his out of Babylon spiritually in respect of Errour; so likewise he will gather all his from all places whither they have been led captive, as well as out of this Land, which doth more evidently appear to be spiritual Babylon then any other place: which gathering shall be, out of doubt, a local separation. The Scriptures to prove, are as followeth, *Isai.* the 8, 9, 13, 14, 25, 26. 27, 34. 35, 43, 52, and 66 Chapters; *Jerem.* the 30, 31, 50, and 51 Chapters; *Ezek.* the 37 and 39 Chapters; *Hosea* the 5, 6, and 13 Chapters; *Malach.* the 13. and *Revel.* 18. Compare these Scriptures, which shew the great tribulation which shall befal the Church of God immediately before her deliverance out of Babylon, in respect of Darkness and Errour, and her deliverance likewise temporally from the bondage of the creature, the hateful enemies of God; and so the Church shall be secured in that chamber spoken of in *Isai.*26. and the wilderness, *Revel.*12. as well in a temporal sense as in a spiritual, which

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is a place of safety, as we may understand it in the letter, which God will provide as a resting-place for the Saints; which I say is an undoubted truth, in respect of the judgements of God which are coming on the earth, an utter destruction of the wicked by Sword, Pestilence and Famine; which is one of the main motives which God doth use, to perswade his people to depart out of Babylon, *Jerem.* the 50 and the 51 Chap. *Rev.* 18.

Unto this it may be objected, *If this were a truth that you speak concerning the gathering away of the Saints, surely God would not hide it from his chosen ones: and certainly God would not suffer them to act as they do, as to endeavour to build up the State that is fallen; and shall the Saints build Babel? sure this is a very prepostorous thing, and certainly this is not a truth hold.*

Answer, That the Saints shall endeavour with all their might to heal Babel, according to the appointment of God, as in *Jerem.* 51.8 9. where it is said, *Babylon is suddenly fallen; howl for Babylon, take balm for her pain, if so be she may be healed.* And when the Saints have endavoured what they can to heal her, then they take up this sad expression, *We would have healed Babel, but she is not healed; let us leave her, and depart every one to his own Country: for her judgement reacheth unto heaven, and is lifted up to the skies.*

Now I shall give an Answer to some Questions, and some Objections, and so close up.

The first Question:

How it can be said that when the Saints depart out of the land of their nativity, they go unto their own Country, if it be to be understood of a local separation.

Unto this I answer, The Land of our nativity is not their own Country to the Saints, if in such a place they are in bondage: for how was the land of Egypt the own Country to the children of Israel, though it was the land of their nativity, and so was Babylon to many of the people of God; but the land of Canaan was the place of their rest: and so

God

God hath prepared a wilderneſſe for the Saints to depart into, when he ſhall gather them from the land of their Captivity: not a wilderneſſe where there is want of all things, but where there ſhall be abundance both of ſpiritual and temporal enjoyments, as can be proved by the Scriptures before quoted; which is an undoubted truth, as well in a literal ſenſe as ſpiritual. I ſay, it may appear to be a wilderneſſe for the preſent to the carnal ſenſe, but it ſhall not be ſo long; for the Scripture doth prefix a time, *Rev.*12. *a time, and half a time*; that is, three yeers and a half: and then, when that time is accompliſhed, as in *Iſai.*31. *the ſolitary places and the wilderneſſe ſhall rejoyce for them, and the deſarts ſhall bloſſome like a roſe.*

The ſecond Queſtion:

What is the reaſon, if God will gather his people out of their land, he doth ſo hide it from the generality of the Saints: for there is not one amongſt a thouſand of your judgement?

Unto this I anſwer, that the Lord doth thus hide it from his Saints, for divers Reaſons.

Firſt, Becauſe he will have them endeavour *vi & armis, id eſt*, by force and might, to heal Babel: which if it were made known unto them that all their labour were in vain, they would not trouble themſelves any further: but God will have it ſo, becauſe he will render his Saints a righteous people unto the whole world, and that they ſhall acknowledge ſhortly, when as they ſhall ſay in the words following, *The Lord hath brought forth our righteouſneſſe; let us declare in Sion the works of the Lord our God.*

The ſecond Reaſon why it is thus hidden, Becauſe if it were revealed, the people of God would be ſo impatient under theſe ſufferings, that they would make too much haſte, and be gone before that God have finiſhed his work on *mount Sion*, which he hath appointed for Babylon to do, in the cruel uſing of the Saints, unto the mortifying of the fleſh in them. And the onely and true reaſon that God doth reveal it to ſo few, is, becauſe there is no conſiderable part of the Church in a capacity to apprehend ſuch a mercy as to have a deliverance out of ſuch bondage as we are in to whom the Lord is pleaſed

to reveal these things, unto our great consolation, in the time of our greatest dolour and extremity.

Now I shall answer to some Objections.

First of all it may be objected, *How can it be made appear that there is more excellency in the feet and toes of the great Image then in the head of gold?*

Unto this I answer, that there is, in divers particulars, as it is held forth in the letter.

As first, There is more excellency in the feet and toes then in the head of gold, because the feet and toes, which were partly of potters clay, and partly of iron, have mixt themselves with the seed of men, and so upon this account the seed of men is more precious then the golden wedge of Ophir: for none will deny but that the body of the meanest man in the world is more worth then raiment, and so of gold, and whatsoever we look on as excellent. Now this is clear in the letter. In a spiritual sense the feet and toes of the great Image is more excellent, because they have mixed themselves with the seed of men. Now the seed of men in this nature, is the Saints.

Unto this it may be objected, *How can that be? for the Saints are but men as others, as it is spoken of Elias, and Moses, and all the faithful, and so they have their infirmities, as the Scriptures speak.*

Unto this I answer, It is true that the Saints are men, and subject to infirmities, none will deny; but the Kings daughter is all glorious within: the Saints do not appear to the world as yet; but when the Witnesses (*Rev.* 11.) shall ascend in a cloud into heaven, then the enemies shall behold them; and then the Saints shall appear as they are, unto the confusion of their enemies, which shall be very shortly.

Now it may be objected, *If it be so as you say, that the seed of men which are mixed in the State, is the Saints, as you call them; yet sure they have done no good: And are they not overvoted, and accounted as the worst of men, because they will not joyn with the rest of the body, insomuch that they are the means to bring all to confusion; Which if they had held together, it would*

have

have been otherwise. It is true, that though the State have mixt themselves with the seed of men, thinking thereby to joyn themselves to the Iron, which is the Monarchical power; yet it cannot be so; for iron and clay will not hold together: insomuch that the stone that was cut out of the mountain hath but smote the Image upon his feet, and hath broken them already. Now here may arise a Question, How it can be proved that there can be more in the seed of men then in the head of gold: for if the seed of men be the Saints in a spiritual sense, then the head of gold must needs be understood to be the Truth: and so I say, How can it be made appear that there is more excellency in the Saints, who are but men, then in that whereby they are sanctified? for Christ prays the Father that he would sanctifie his by the Word; and the Word, says he, is truth.

Unto this I answer, There is more excellency in the Saints then in the Truth: I will instance in some particulars. Our Saviour in *Matthew* speaking concerning the doctrine of the Pharisees, who taught that if any did swear by the Temple, it was nothing; but whosoever sware by the gold of the Temple, offended: *ye fools*, saith he, *for whether is greater, the gold, or the temple which sanctifieth the gold?* So by this we see that the Saints are more excellent then the Truth: they are the temples of the living God, the sons and daughters of God Almighty, who do partake of the same nature, union, love and glory as Christ our Saviour, our Head and Elder Brother, *Joh.* 17. from vers. 21. unto the end. From the Scripture it doth clearly appear that the Saints are more excellent then the Truth it self. But I would not be mistaken: for I do not speak here of Truth as God is said to be Truth; nor dare I speak of it as Christ is called the Word of God, as in *Joh.* 1. 1 *Joh.* and *Revel.* But I speak of Truth as it is held forth by the ministery of man in Babylon, which appeareth most glorious unto to the carnal sense, being held forth by men of learning and parts, which shall fall in the fall of Babylon.

So, my dear friend, I have followed God in making forth that which he is pleased to convey by me as his instrument; to whom I acknowledge all: for here is *no flesh to glory in his*

presence, for it is none of mine, the Lord knows: And with this I shall close up, desiring the Lord will manifest himself unto you, in discovering those things which are hidden from the world, who, when they think of peace and safety, the day of the Lord comes upon them as a thief in the night. But I may say of you, as the Apostle did of the *Thessalonians*, *You brethren are not in darkness, that so that day should come upon you as a thief: you are the children of the day; We are not of the night, nor of darkness, therefore let us not sleep as do others, but let us watch and be sober*: And that must we do, to whom the Lord is pleased to discover himself, in making us to know that which is hidden unto others: we dare not sleep nor be silent, but stand upon our watch-tower, as to wait for further discovery, so to make known that which God hath revealed already. And so here I shall close up, committing you to God, and to the power of his grace, who will manifest himself more then ever, in making his to know that now, which hath been hidden from the beginning of the world. And so wishing all happiness in the Lord, I shall ever remain yours in the greatest engagements.

An Addition.

Now having spoken concerning the spiritual meaning of the feet and toes spoken of *Dan.* 2. and likewise as God hath enabled me, I have answered to some Objections; yet upon further consideration, there remain others, unto which by the help of God I shall give answer.

Object. 1. In the first place then, *How I can make it appear that the feet and toes of the great Image is one State? How can it be confined to that Parliament of England which is come to confusion? for it is evident the Scripture speaks of divers Kings which are the feet and toes: for it is said in the last days of these Kings, speaking of the last powers, which is the feet and toes, that the God of heaven shall set up a Kingdom.*

Unto this I answer, that if we wrest the Prophesies to the Letter, the feet and toes appear to be divers Kings, even ten

ten in number, answering to the ten horns that support the beast, *Dan.*7. and *Rev.*13. Howsoever, we have no warrant from the Scripture for any such interpretation, the Scripture being altogether silent: there is an interpretation given of the rest of the four Monarchs; but for the Monarchical power which is in the mixture of the feet and toes, there is no interpretation given, but its own acts, which the Scripture mentions in *Dan.* 2. 7, 8, 11. Now in the Letter, the four Monarchies spoken of *Dan.*2. which was first the King of Babylon, the head of gold, and so the other three Monarchies successively as the Scripture speaketh it, needs no interpretation, because it is clear in the letter: but howsoever, all Prophecies must have a spiritual interpretation; for if it should be confined to the letter, there would follow great absurdities; because when the feet of the great Image are broken, the iron and clay, brasse, silver & gold, falls all together, and becomes as the chaff of the summer-floor: whereas it is well known, that the Babylonian Monarchy, and the other two following, are fallen; the last is fallen in good part, before the feet and toes are broken, which in the letter are said to be broken in the first place, by the stone which is cut out of the mountain. And so it is clear that the great Image spoken of *Dan.* 2. is to be understood otherwise then we have formerly: and certainly it will appear to be that Image of Babel that the Lord will visit, *Jerem.*51.47,52. Now the Image or Images of Babylon are not to be understood in the letter, that is, such things as we count Images, for they are not capable of visiting or punishing; but is to be understood in a spiritual sense, and so whatsoever is spoken here in *Dan.* 2. concerning this great Image, whose head was of gold, and his brest and arms of silver, is to be accomplished in mystical Babylon; and so in the first place, the head of this great Image, which is of gold, doth concern the spiritual excellencies which do appear in mystical Babylon, in respect of the glorious truths which have been held forth by the Saints, but in confusion, which is Babylon, *Jer.*51. where it is said that Babylon hath been as a golden cup in the Lords hand; the nations have drunken of her wine,

wine, therefore do the nations rage: and it is evident that Babylon in the Saints, which is the head of gold, is lifted up very high, in respect of those unspeakable comforts that the Saints have in the apprehension of the truth which is held forth by Babylon, in that it is said, *How art thou fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning*, Isai. 14.

Now having spoken of Babylon in the Saints, which is the head of gold, now I shall speak of Babylon in the Ordinance, which may be very fitly compared to the brest and arms of the great Image, which are of silver. I speak of the Ordinances which are held forth in the purest manner, even those which are most agreeable to the letter of the Word, even that element that melts with fervent heat, which is a degree below Babylon in the Saints, which is the head of gold.

But now it may be objected, *How can the brest and arms, which are of silver, signifie the Ordinances, whereas the Ordinance in it self is but a vail or shadow, and silver is a pure metal, though not so esteemed of as gold?*

Unto this I answer; Though the Ordinance in it self is but a shadow, and so Babylon, yet no question but that there are some glorious truths held forth, which may be compared unto silver; though the gold and silver it self shall fall in the fall of Babylon.

Now having spoken of the head of gold, and the brest and arms, which are silver; next I shall speak of the belly and thighs, which are of brasse, that may very well signifie the counterfeit truths which were held forth in the National Church of *England*, as touching Discipline. I may very well say they are altogether counterfeit, because they have no rule from the Word for what they practise, neither for the calling of the Ministery, nor the institution of such a Church.

Now having spoken concerning what is to be understood of the Image of Babel in reference to the Saints, and the Ordinances, and that counterfeit Church which was amongst us, now I shall speak concerning those parts of the Image that concern the state in which Babylon hath begun to fall; and in the first place I shall speak of the Monarchical power,

of

of this mixture of the feet and toes, even that power which rules in the tenth part of the great City, which is mystical Babylon.

But now some may object, That *Babylon is everywhere, and so not to be confined unto any State.*

Unto this I answer; It is true that Babylon cannot be confined; yet the Scripture is clear, that whatsoever is spoken of that Babylon wherein the Witnesses are slain, *Rev.* 11. *Jer.* 50 and 51, or where the Saints are in bondage, *&c.* now this Babylon spoken in these Scriptures, is the tenth part of the great City, which is *spiritually called Sodom and Egypt, where our Lord was crucified*, as *Rev.* 11. which doth evidently appear to be this Island of *Great Britain*, as I have formerly written. Now as for the Monarchical power that hath been acted in the tenth part of the great City immediately before its fall, it is well known to be before quoted *Dan.* 2, 7, 8, 11 Chap. The Scripture will speak it forth, to be an arbitrary power, which hath evidently appeared to be in this Island: which arbitrary power hath not onely been in the Monarchical State, but in the foregoing Parliament of England, which did in its special manner appear to be that glorious State spoken of *Ezek.* 28. and not onely have spiritual excellencies appeared in her, but she hath appeared to be Babylon in special manner, and in particular, the violence done unto the Saints: remember *March* and *April*, *Anno. Dom.* 1647. and so accordingly the inhabitants of Caldea do go on to fill up the measure of their sin, in the persecuting of the Saints, to the hastening of the dreadful indignation of that God, who is nothing but love in his own nature, but consuming fire to his enemies.

Another Objection may arise. Some may say, *What is the reason that you do give the spiritual meaning of the head of gold, and the breast of silver, and the belly of brasse, and do onely give a literal signification of the legs of iron, and the feet and toes of iron and clay?*

Answ. As for the three former, they have been accomplished already in the letter, and the fourth almost, though there

there is some of it remains behinde, concerning which we must give literal interpretation, before the spiritual meaning shall be made known. Now as for the literal intepretation of the legs, feet and toes of the great Image, and the spiritual interpretation of the head, brest and belly, all this is to be accomplished in a spiritual and literal sense together; and the spiritual meaning of the legs, feet and toes, shall be accomplished in the Kingdom of the Saints. And with this I shall end this discourse.

The

The Second Letter,

Concerning the nature of the dissolving the heavens and the earth.

My dear Friends,

I Have cause to blesse God, who causeth me to triumph in tribulation: for sure I am most strong in God, when I am weakest in my self; and more enabled to act by the Spirit, when I am most straightned in the flesh; and *having nothing* in visible appearance, in the enjoyment of the Saints, or any other spiritual or temporal comforts, *yet I possesse all things* in my God, in whom I live, and he in me; and my joy and consolation is not in my self, in that I live in God, in mine own particular; but my joy is the joy of you all; for sure my soul is bound up with yours in the same bundle, as the Apostle says: I am alive, if you stand fast in these terrible times, wherein *the powers of heaven* are *shaken*, and not onely the powers of heaven shaken in the Saints, but heaven it self is *passing away with a great noise, and the element melts with fervent heat.*

Now here I shall, God assisting, make forth that which I have formerly written, which for the present I am deprived of; howsoever, I do here depend upon his help, who I am sure will give it in again, so far as it is spiritual, enabling me to communicate it for the benefit of others, so far as it shall stand with his glory; which Writing did consist of divers particulars; As,

First, concerning the state of the Church of God in Babylon, in respect of that wonderful tribulation before her de-

liverance out of Babylon, and her being gathered out of Babylon, and her being brought into the wilderneſſe after her deliverance, and the glorious ſtate of the Church which ſhall follow: concerning all which particulars, moſt of the Saints will joyn with me; onely this wilderneſſe-condition is lookt on as moſt diſconſolate, inſomuch that the Saints themſelves may think as the children of Iſrael, that it is beſt for them to continue ſtill in Babylon; eſpecially thoſe who do not onely live under the Ordinances, but in them, in abundance of ſenſible conſolation, which I am ſure is not ſpiritual, inſomuch that it may well be compared to the fleſh-pots of Egypt.

Now as for the former Writing, ſo far as God ſhall enable me, I ſhall here make it forth, and ſo ſhew how far the Saints do joyn with me, and where we differ. Now all the people of God will agree in this, that the Lord will gather his people out of Babylon, in bringing them out of Darkneſſe and Errour; they do likewiſe expect a glorious ſtate of the Church; but in contrariety of judgements one from another, which is moſt in circumſtances, and not in ſubſtance. Now the particular judgements of the Saints are as followeth.

In the firſt place, and ſo in that they do moſt agree, which is concerning this new heaven and earth that we do expect, which is conceived ſhall not be till all theſe old things ſhall paſſe away: And they do likewiſe expect an utter diſſolution of this viſible heaven and earth, and ſo after that, the glorious ſtate of the Church follows. Others likewiſe do conceive that the Jews ſhall be converted to the Faith, before the end. And ſo concerning the glorious ſtate of the Church, moſt conceive it in a ſpiritual ſenſe; yet ſome do not deny but that there ſhall be a temporal power which ſhall go forth from the Saints, as in *Revel.* 2. 16, 17. and *Pſal.* 2. which is the Kingdom of the Saints that is begun even here in Babylon, amongſt their implacable enemies, as *Mic.* 4. from verſ. 8. unto the end, *Dan.* 2. 41. Now I ſhall not undertake to confute any of theſe particulars by force of Argument, but I ſhall ſhew how far I can joyn with them, and where I differ.

Now,

Now in the first place, Whereas the Saints do expect a dissolution of all things at the last day, when *the Son of man shall come in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory*, and all the Saints with him in like manner, who shall be gathered together by the sound of a trumpet, as in 1 *Cor.* 15. and 1 *Thess.* 4 and 5 Chap. concerning which time, the Scriptures are as follow, *Isai.* 2. towards the end; *Isa.* 13. *Isa.* 51. 6. *Isa.* 66. *Psal.* 50. *Revel* 6. 13. unto the end; *Revel.* 20. all which Scriptures, and many more, speak of the day of Judgement: and unto this I will assent, in that I do verily believe that the glorious state of the Church shall not be until all these things be fulfilled which are spoken in these Scriptures; as our Saviour saith, *Heaven and earth shall passe away, but my Word shall not passe away*; for that cannot be shaken, because it is the foundation of the new heaven and the new earth, as *Isa.* 51. 16. which is not to be understood of the written Word; for that shall passe away when all things are fulfilled. Now that Word of God which continues for ever, is God himself, as *Joh.* 1. *In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and that Word was God*: so that as God was from all eternity, so this Word of God continues to all eternity; and sure this Word begins to be manifested in the Saints, 1 *Joh.* 4. though it hath been a long time hidden. Howsoever, though I do joyn in this, that the glorious state of the Church shall not be till these visible things are passed away; yet I differ from them in the matter which shall passe away, and in the manner how it shall passe away, and by what means it shall passe away. Now that matter which shall passe away, is generally conceived to be this visible heaven and earth, at the last day; and by what means, by fire, and in what manner, it is made forth at large, 2 *Pet.* 3. where it is said, *that the day of the Lord shall come as a thief in the night, wherein the heavens shall passe away with a great noise, and the element shall melt with fervent heat, and the earth with the works therein shall be burnt up.* Now I say I do differ in all these particulars in some sense: for I differ

First, in the matter which shall passe away: for I do not con-

conceive that these visible heavens shall be dissolved, and so consequently of that which follows.

Unto this some may reply, *Doth not the Apostle Peter speak plainly that the heavens and earth are reserved to fire against the day of judgement and perdition of wicked and ungodly men?*

To this I answer, If you do observe the Apostle *Peter* in the words foregoing, you shall finde that he makes distinction between the world that perished by water, and the heavens and earth which now are, which are said to be reserved to fire: whereas this visible heaven and earth, as it is understood in the letter to be the firmament, and the earth that we live in, as it was distinguished in the Creation, it is the same as it was from the beginning, as the mockers say, *vers.* 4. Now whereas the Apostle makes this distinction between the heaven and earth which was before the flood, and the heaven and earth that now is, whereas it is the same in the letter, none will deny; I say, from this distinction of the Apostle in this Scripture, and many other Scriptures which joyn in this, I do conclude that these Scriptures, which we have formerly conceived to concern the dissolution of this visible heaven and earth, do onely concern the passing away of the Ordinances, which is that heaven wherein God hath appeared gloriously, unto the unspeakable consolation of the Saints: and this earth here spoken of, is the best part of man, as his natural wisdom, and humane learning, and gifts, not onely common gifts, but spiritual gifts, whereby they are enabled to speak unto edification, which may be comprehended under the same notion; for the Apostle speaks as if the wicked may have the common gifts of the Spirit. Now those gifts that the Saints have been carried forth in of late, do evidently appear to be that element which melts with fervent heat. But here you may observe, that though heaven in our sense is thus on fire 2 *Pet.* 3. 12. yet it is but dissolved, and the element is but melted onely: here is a difference between heaven and the element; for heaven onely ceaseth to be in that manner as it was in grosse, yet there is no alteration in the nature of it: as when we say the Parliament is dissolved, the men continue the same, onely it

ceaseth

ceaſeth to be a body Politick; and likewiſe our precious Cordials (as *Bezer*) are not effectual to our good, untill they be diſſolved into ſome liquid matter: ſo God, who is our heaven in the Ordinance; for there can be no heaven without him: And ſo when God, which is our heaven, ſhall be thus diſſolved, and ceaſe being covered with a vail, then this vail ſhall vaniſh away like ſmoke, which vail is the Ordinance; and heaven being diſſolved, the Saints are in a capacity to contain this heaven in the fleſh; and ſurely God, who is our heaven, ſhall appear in the fleſh of all his Saints ſhortly, in his glorious manifeſtations: for, as the Apoſtle *Peter* ſaith, *We, according to his promiſe, look for a new heaven and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteouſneſſe*; which is not a heaven without us, as before, in the Ordinances and the teachings of men, but it is a heaven within us, even God manifeſted in the fleſh of his Saints, as in the humanity of Chriſt. Now the Saints ſtand in the ſame relation to God as our elder brother Chriſt, whilſt they are in the ſtate of imperfection, as *John* ſaith, *We are the ſons of God, but it doth not appear what we ſhall be: but when he ſhall appear, we ſhall be like him; for we ſhall ſee him as he is, and then are the ſons of God manifeſt.* Now we ſee that we are no loſers, though our heaven being on fire hath been diſſolved: for now we have our heaven within us, that cannot be ſhaken; but our heaven without us hath been ſhaken, which is the Ordinance, and hath likewiſe been taken away: for when God withdraws, and doth not appear in it, then all is gone. But howſoever, here is matter of unſpeakable comfort to the Saints, even at this time wherein the powers of heaven are ſhaken, and ſhall likewiſe vaniſh away; becauſe that which remains cannot be ſhaken, though it be diſſolved, ceaſing to appear in that manner as formerly, as covered with a vail; but now we ſhall ſee face to face.

Now having ſpoken at large concerning the heavens being on fire, which is diſſolved to ſome, and ſhall be diſſolved to all, when the Saints ſhall ſee God as he is, becauſe the Ordinance, which is that vail that hath hid the glory of God from us whilſt we live ſo lowe in the earth, is taken away; becauſe

we

we could not see God and live, except he had been so covered: but when this vail shall vanish away like smoke, *Isa.* 51. and *be rolled together like a scroll*, Revel. 6. 14. and every mountain and hill shall be removed out of his place, and heaven shall be shaken, and the earth shall be removed out of his place in the wrath of the Lord, *Isa.* 13. 13, 14. *Heb.* 12, God saith, that *once more I will not shake earth onely, but also heaven.* Now this *once more* signifies the removing of those things which are shaken, that the things which cannot be shaken may remain. And our Saviour saith, *Heaven and earth shall passe away, but my Word shall not passe away*, which is God himself. Now that which vanisheth and passeth away, and is shaken and taken away, as in these Scriptures here quoted; heaven which is here spoken of is the Ordinances, which shall passe away when God appeareth in his glorious manifestations, when he comes *into his Temple*, Mal. 3, 1, &c. But it is said, *Who can abide his coming, and who shall stand when he appeareth?* Heaven passeth away now with a great noise; there is great trouble in the Saints when this shall be. Now heaven, which is the Word of God, in distinction to that heaven which passeth away with a great noise, *v.* 10. though this heaven, which is the word of God, shall be dissolved, it remains the same in nature, though not in such a grosse substance: Now when it is thus dissolved, there is more spiritual efficacy in it then before, in that this Word shall become flesh, as is spoken of Christ, 1 *Joh.* 1. And so, as the Word of God did become flesh in Christ our elder brother, so this Word shall become flesh in all the Saints, when God shall be manifested in their flesh, and they likewise shall be declared mightily to be the sons of God, by the Resurrection from the dead; not the Resurrection of the body natural, which we do not expect in that manner as formerly we conceived, but the resurrection from the dead in a spiritual sense. Now concerning the resurrection of the bodies of the Saints which is expected after their natural death, it is to me a mystery as yet, and so I conceive it is to most of the Saints. As for that resurrection which is held forth commonly in the Scripture, it is in part made known unto me, as

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to be dead with Christ, and so to be risen with him. Now to be dead with Christ, the Apostle saith is to be dead unto the Ordinances, and all vails and shadows; and to be risen with him, is to live in God, in seeing eye to eye, when God shall bring again Sion, *Isai.* 52. And so that resurrection which we do expect, is not the resurrection after death, but a resurrection in a spiritual sense, whilst we are in the flesh, before the state of glory; and it is a resurrection out of a spiritual defection which we have been brought into, being slain by our iniquity, as *Hos.* 13. where God saith, *O Ephraim, thou hast destroyed thy self, but in me is thy help.* Onely here is a difference in the cause of the death of Christ, and the cause of this death in the Saints in a spiritual sense. Now the cause of the death of Christ, was the sin of mankinde, as the Scripture speaketh: but the Saints are slain by their own sin.

Now here will arise a Question, *How can it be said that the Saints are slain by their iniquities, seeing Christ hath satisfied for the sins of the whole world?*

Answ. It is true, the satisfaction which was in Christ, it was a sufficient ransome; for in that the whole Creation is redeemed from the curse of the Law: and if all did believe, all should have benefit by this redemption: for it is evident that none are damned, but for the sin of unbelief, as the Scripture declares in divers places. So howsoever, though there be such a sufficient ransome, yet none have benefit by it, but those who do believe, and unto them the guilt and malediction of sin is taken away: but though the guilt and malediction of sin be taken away by this redemption, and so the Saints cannot be slain by their iniquity, in respect of the spiritual man; yet they are slain in their own apprehension, when they are bereft of all joy and comfort in the spirit, in that God hath withdrawn himself from them: And here it may be said they are put to death with Christ, in that they are conformable to his sufferings, in respect of the spiritual defertion that Christ was in, *who in the days of his flesh did pour out strong prayers with crying and tears,* as in the *Hebrews*: and so likewise the Saints are to be conformable to Christ their Head, in being slain.

ſlain by the cruel hatred of the wicked, in reſpect of reproach, &c. And ſo the Saints may be ſaid to be ſlain with Chriſt, when they are ſlain by their iniquities, as in the firſt Chapter of *Hoſea*; *When Ephraim ſaw his ſickneſſe, and Judah his wound, then went Ephraim to the Aſſyrian, and ſent to king Jareb; yet could he not heal nor cure him of his wound: for, ſaith God, I will be unto Ephraim as a lion, and as a young lion to the houſe of Iſrael: I will tear and go away; I will take away, and none ſhall reſcue.* And then God returns to his place until they do acknowledge their offences: in their afflictions they will ſeek him early. And ſo the reſurrection of Chriſt follows in the ſixth Chapter, where thoſe which are thus ſlain in a ſpiritual ſenſe, take unto themſelves theſe words, and ſay, *Come, let us return unto the Lord: for he hath wounded, and he will heal; after two days he will revive us, and the third day we ſhall live in his ſight.* So in *Hoſ.* 13, it is ſaid that *Ephraim had deſtroyed himſelf*, as we may ſee in the words following, in that death follows: for it is ſaid, that *Ephraim was an unwiſe ſon: for he ſhould not have ſtood ſtill in the breaking forth of children; but he doth ſtand ſtill*; and in ſtanding ſtill he dieth. But what ſaith God? *I will ranſome him from the power of the grave, I will redeem him from death: O death, I will be thy plague; O grave, I will be thy deſtruction: repentance ſhall be hid from mine eyes.* Howſoever, all his former fruitfulneſſe ſhall be blown away, as in the words following in the next Chapter, where thoſe which are thus ranſomed as before, take unto themſelves theſe words, and ſay, *They ſhall no more look unto Idols, they ſhall no more ſeek unto Aſhur*, nor any carnal confidence, *but they ſhall wait on the Lord, and in him ſhall they truſt.* And thoſe who have attained unto a reſurrection with Chriſt, if they go on to know the Lord, *he ſhall return as the rain, and as the later rain upon the earth.* And thoſe that ſhall attain unto this reſurrection as before ſpoken, *ſhall grow up as calves in the ſtall*, as *Mal.* 4. And thoſe likewiſe which are thus riſen with Chriſt, ſhall be ſecured in the chamber ſpoken of in *Iſa.* 26. in reſpect of the ſpiritual man, whilſt the Lord comes out of his place to deſtroy the works of the fleſh in us, which

are the inhabitants of the earth in a spiritual sense, and the chamber is God himself, wherein the spiritual man liveth in security and peace, even that man-childe spoken of *Revel.* 1. who is *caught up to God, and to his throne*; which man-childe shall rule all nations with a rod of iron; even this spiritual man shall be secured when the heavens are shaken, and the earth is removed out of its place; yea, the spiritual man in those who are living at the coming of Christ, which never died in respect of the spiritual desertions; even that part of the Church which doth remain when two parts are cut off and die, as in *Zech.* 13. from vers. 8. to the end. I say, the spiritual man both in those that are risen at the coming of Christ, with those that are risen from the dead, shall be caught up into the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air. Now these clouds are not the clouds of the air, but the clouds of heaven, which are the Saints themselves, which shall witnesse that all this is done: Christ's being taken up into the clouds of this visible firmament, did typifie the taking up of the Saints spiritually unto God, concerning which we have a cloud of witnesses in the Saints; and accordingly do expect Christ coming in glory spiritually, and all his Saints with him, as the Scripture speaks.

Now having spoken at large concerning the heavens being dissolved, which remains the same in nature, though it ceaseth to be in that manner as before; and having likewise spoken of the Saints being dead and risen with Christ spiritually: Now in the next place I shall make forth, so far as God shall reveal, that which followeth.

And in the first place, concerning those elements which melt with fervent heat, which certainly is to be understood to be the glorious truths which are held forth in Babylon, in which there is great mixture of Errour, that may very well be compared unto that head of gold, and the brest and arms of silver of the great Image, *Dan.* 2. which shall be tried by the fire of the Spirit: and though the truths cannot burn, yet they shall be melted, and the fire shall try every mans work, whether it be of God or no: and I am sure, *if any man build on the foundation wood, hay or stubble, it shall be burnt* up with this fire,

which tries and refines the Truths and the Saints; and so the melting of these elements, which are the Truth, shall but refine them as silver, and purifie them as gold; and so it loseth nothing but drosse; which is the earth and the works thereof that shall be burnt up, as follows in this Scripture; which burning we have formerly conceived to be the utter consummation of this visible earth in which we live; but now we finde it otherwise, in that the books which were sealed begin now to be opened, even that which was hidden from the Prophets and Apostles, and Christ himself as man, who speaks concerning the end of the world, that *of that day and hour knoweth no man, but the Father onely:* but when God shall appear in his glorious manifestations in the Saints, and the enemies of God shall behold the glory of the Saints, when the Lord shall make bare his holy arm in the sight of all the Nations, and *all the ends of the earth shall behold the salvation of the Lord*, Isa. 52. but unto their horrour and amazement, *Zech.* 13. So you see that the earth before spoken of, which shall be burnt up, is not the earth we live in, which is harmlesse in it self; for sure it can do no evil, but by the blessing of God it doth much good, though not of it self, yet according to the providence of God, who maketh the sun to shine and the rain to fall, that the earth may bring forth fruit: and sure every creature of God is good in its kinde, and therefore the earth cannot be said to be evil, nor her works evil, and accordingly it shall not be burnt up; for the curse is taken from the earth, in that redemption that was in Christ: and in that the earth is not fruitful, but brings forth briars and thorns, and the like, it is not because the earth is evil, but onely a just judgement of God, to make a fruitful Land barren for the sins of them that dwell in it: and so we cannot finde in Scripture that this visible heaven and earth are to have an end; for we finde to the contrary, that they are to continue, as in *Jer.* 33. 25. and 35. 36. and likewise it is said in the *Psalms* and in *Ecclesiastes*, that the earth endureth for ever; and so where it is said, that *the heavens and earth that now are, are kept by the same Word in store, reserved unto fire against the day of judgement and perdition*

of

of wicked and ungodly men, this ye see is to be understood otherwise then hath been formerly.

Now I shall make forth in brief concerning those things which do remain, according as God shall reveal the meaning of this Scripture.

Now in the first place, where it is said, that *the heavens and earth which now are*, in distinction from that heaven and earth which were before the flood; which, if you do understand it in the letter, is the same as it was from the Creation; and therefore, as I have before spoken, *the heaven and earth which now is*, is to be understood in a spiritual sense, as, the *heavens* to be the glorious Ordinance wherein God hath appeared, and the *earth* to be wisdom, and gifts, and the like; these heavens and earth are to be *reserved to fire against the day of judgement of wicked and ungodly men.*

Unto this some may object, *How can this heaven and earth you speak of be reserved to fire for the destruction of wicked men, whereas the Saints suffer the judgements of God in this kinde, and the wicked and ungodly are freed?*

Unto this I answer, *Judgement begins at the house of God*, as *Peter* saith; *and if it begin at the house of God, where shall the wicked and ungodly appear? and if it be thus with the green tree, what shall become of the dry?* But howsoever though this fire with which God doth judge flesh in his Saints, as it is in *Isa. 66. the Lord doth judge with fire and the sword all flesh*, in the first place: so I say this fire breaks forth in the house of God, unto the destruction of the flesh; and so you see the benefit that comes by it. Now this destruction of the flesh, it is not to be understood in the letter, but flesh in a spiritual sense, and so the works of the earth likewise. Now flesh in the Saints is that earth which shall be burnt up in some, by the fire of the Spirit, which hath dissolved heaven, and hath melted the elements, and burnt up the earth with the works thereof, even that which remains when the pure metal is refined and separated from it. Now this earth, as before I have spoken, is the best part of man, as his Reason, Natural Wisdom, and Learning: Now as the fire of the Spirit dissolves heave,

and melts the elements, and burns up the earth, which is the flesh in the Saints; so the fiery trials which are inflicted upon the people of God whilst they are in Babylon, do effect the same work as the fire of the Spirit, though it doth not so appear to our apprehension. Now when this is done, and heaven, which is the Word of God, is dissolved, ceasing to appear in a shadow, which is to see Christ in the flesh; now we do enjoy heaven more spiritually, in that we have more spiritual discerning; and Truth, which was our element, hath been refined, and hath lost nothing but its drosse; and the earth being burnt up in the Saints, when all this is accomplished in the Saints.

Object. *How can it be said that the heavens and earth that now are, which is the Ordinances, as before spoken, can be reserved to fire against the day of judgement and perdition of wicked and ungodly men?*

Unto this I answer; It is, howsoever it may appear: for now heaven is passing away with a great noise, and the elements are melting with fervent heat, and the earth and the works thereof are burning up, which is all accomplishing in the Saints; and at this time the Church of God is in a sad condition: for the sorrows of a travelling woman are come upon them, as in *Revel.* 12. and *Hos.* 13. and *Isai.* 26. nay, the pangs of death are upon her; and sure it is not an easie matter for the soul to part from the body; and it is no otherwise when we must part from all our former comforts; and so when the Saints are under these fiery trials, the dolorous nature of them cannot be expressed: at this time the hateful enemies of God, the inhabitants of Caldea, do adde unto their affliction, and in doing so, they do procure damnation to themselves, *whose judgement* (as *Jude* saith) *of a long time slumbreth not*; where he speaks of *Enoch* the seventh from *Adam*, who propheſied of these things, *Behold the Lord cometh with ten thousand of his Saints, to execute judgement*, &c. And so you see that these heavens and earth are reserved to fire against the day of judgement and the perdition of the wicked. And surely the long-suffering of of God, in that the heavens and

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earth have not passed away long ago, is, as the Apostle *Peter* saith, *salvation to us-ward*, in that God was not willing that any should perish, but that all should be saved: that is, God will offer salvation to all, and for this reason this heavens and earth are continued, which is the Ordinances, and the teachings of the Saints, because, God appearing in them, they are the ordinary means of salvation: for, as the Apostle *Paul* saith, *faith cometh by hearing* the Word of God preached: and certainly, though there have been much of earth made forth by the ministery of men, yet there is somewhat of God, so much as is necessary to salvation. And so when this heaven and earth which is reserved to fire in reference to the Saints, shall passe away with a great noise, and the element shall melt with fervent heat, according as before it is spoken, then presently follows the perdition of wicked and ungodly men: for when heaven is passed away, and vanisht away, and taken away, which is the Ordinance, then there remains no more means of grace in an ordinary way, but howsoever no doubt but God will work extraordinarily in bringing in those who are heirs of salvation.

Now another reason why the perdition of wicked and ungodly men followeth immediately upon the passing away of the Ordinances, is, Because when God is refining his people in destroying the flesh in them, he doth make use of the wrath of men, who do fill up the measure of their sin, by their cruel usage of the Saints: but sure *the wrath of man shall turn to the praise of God*, and the remainder of wrath will he restrain: and when God hath finished his work on mount Sion, whilst they are in Babylon, and so shall have gathered his people from all places whither they have been led captive in respect of a local separation from their hateful enemies, then he will visit the proud heart of the King of Babylon, and then the violence which hath been done unto the Saints, shall be on Babylon, shall the inhabitants of Sion say, as in *Jer.* 51. and our blood be on the inhabitants of Caldea, shall Jerusalem say. And so when heaven and earth are passed away, and the Saints gathered away, then follows the destruction of the

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wicked. The Scriptures to prove it are many; as in *Isa.* 13. 14, *&c. Jer.* 50.8.44. and 51.45. *Mic.* 4. *Rev.* 18. This is the day of judgement and perdition of wicked and ungodly men.

Now having spoken, so far as God hath carried me forth, concerning the former particulars; I shall come to the next as it lieth in order, which is concerning the glorious state of the Church that shall not be until the Jews are converted unto the Faith. Unto this I do agree with those of this judgement; howsoever we differ concerning whom those Jews are which shall be converted. Now as God hath made known to me, I conceive that those Jews which are to be converted, are not the natural Jews: for we know there are no natural Jews, in that they are mixt among all Nations. But let it be granted that there are; yet it can be proved that the ten Tribes did never return out of Captivity, and so likewise they have no Genealogie: howsoever I do not deny but that there are a remnant of those people according to the election of grace. But the Apostle *Paul*, who speaks most of the conversion of the Jews, speaks by the spirit of prophecie: and sure the Prophets and Apostles, though they spake by the inspiration of the Spirit, yet they did see no further then the accomplishment of the Prophecies in the letter, in that the spiritual meaning was shut up until the end of time, as in *Dan.* 12. You shall finde that when the Apostle had spoken at large concerning the calling of the Jews, *Rom.* 11. when he had spoken all which God had revealed by the Spirit, he breaks forth in o admiration; *O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgements, and his ways past finding out!* And so when we read in Scripture concerning the calling of the Jews, it must of necessity be confined to the *Israel of God*; not *Israel in the flesh*, but the Israel according to election, who are the children of God according to the promise, which consist both of Jews and Gentiles: for the Apostle saith, *Rom.* 3, that *he is not a Jew which is one outwardly, neither is that Circumcision which is Circumcision in the flesh: but Circumcision is of the heart, not of the letter,*

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whose praise is not of man, but of God. And the Apostle saith likewise, *All are not Israel, which are of Israel; but in Isaac shall thy seed be called:* So the children of the promise are counted for the seed. And in *Rom.* 11. it is said, that *the election have attained what they sought for*; but the election have attained it, and *the rest were hardened.* But and if you will needs have it to be the Nation of the Jews which shall be converted, it cannot be the natural Jews, because they are mixt amongst the Heathens. Why then it must needs be a Jew according to profession: Why then if it be so, we see a good part of the Jews by profession converted to the Faith already; and the Lord will make a short work in the earth: For do you not see many of the Israel of God which have been under the bondage of the Law, in entering into Church-fellowship? and do not we see that God does begin to discover unto them their errour, in thinking that they were under the Gospel, and so possest of the substance? but now they finde, unto their sorrow, that it was but a shadow, in that it vanished away. But howsoever, the comfort is, the Lord does begin to *pour upon the house of David and the inhabitants of Jerusalem the spirit of prayer and supplication:* and though they are in sadnesse in the consideration of what they have done, and so *look upon him whom they have pierced,* and *shall be in bitternesse for him, as one that is in bitternesse for his onely son*; and *in that day there shall be great mourning in Jerusalem, as the mourning of Hadadrimmon in the valley of Megiddo, as in* Zech. 12. from vers. 10. to the end; but though (I say) it be thus with the Saints at present, there is a joyful day at hand, when *the Lord shall return their Captivity as the rivers in the South.* And so whatsoever is spoken concerning the return of the children of Israel out of Captivity, it is to be understood of Israel in the spirit. And whereas the Scripture speaks in the *Revelation* of the Tribes which are to be sealed, it is to be understood likewise in this sense.

Now as for the judgement that is given unto the Saints, the glorious state of the Church, it consists most of all in respect of spirituals; though I do not deny but that there shall be a temporall

temporal power, which is begun already: for the Kingdom is begun even here in Babylon, among the implacable enemies of God, as in *Dan.*2. *Mic.*4. Now I do joyn with the Saints in this their judgement; though I must go further: for it will appear, that though the Kingdom is begun in Babylon, yet it shall not stand in Babylon, which is Confusion; but it is clear that God will gather his people out of Babylon, for divers Reasons.

The first is, Because they are to be distinguished from other people, in that God will appear in them in glory; which cannot be here in Babylon, in that the Saints here are *as black as pots*, they are *the off-scowring of all things*, they are vile in name, and sore in affliction, even as Christ when he was on earth; but *When he shall appear, We shall appear With him in glory*; and certainly *the whole earth shall be full of the salvation of the Lord*, his holy arm in delivering his people, which cannot be until he shall gather us from amongst our enemies, and so go before us himself.

Now another Reason is, why God will gather his people from all places whither they have been led captive; Because the Saints cannot sing *the Song of Moses and the Lamb*, until the Lord hath given a full deliverance to his Church, and brought them into the wilderness spoken of in *Hos.* 2. 14. And sure the Lord hath denounced to bring utter destruction on Babylon, which assuredly shall come to passe: and the Lord can do nothing in this kinde, until he have gathered his people out from amongst them. Now the Scriptures to prove the gathering away of the Saints out of Babylon, and the utter destruction that follows, are, *Isai.* the 13, 14, 50, 51, and 52 Chap. *Revel.* 18. Now the Scriptures which do speak of the wilderness that the Lord will gather his people into when they are delivered out of Babylon, are likewise many: in which wilderness, though there shall be nothing in sight in respect of spirituals and temporals, yet the glory of Lebanon shall be brought into it, and the fruitfulness of Carmel. Now this wilderness which is propheſied of, that shall be a receptable to the Saints, it was never yet accomplished in

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the letter, and therefore we do verily expect to have it accomplished both in the letter, and in a spiritual sense. Now it is not needful for me to speak any thing concerning this wilderness: for the Scripture it self is so clear, that he that runs may read it. The Scriptures to prove, are these: *Isai.* 51. 1, 2. *Isa.* 43. from vers. 4. to the 12. *Isai.* 35. thorowout; *Isa.* 51. 3. *Isa.* 48. 20. *Hos.* 2. from vers. 14. to the end; *Rev.* 12. *Ezek.* 34. *Isai.* 34. from vers. 20. to the end.

Now I had thought to close up this Discourse that concerns the wilderness-condition which we do expect God will gather his Church into, when he shall separate them from Babylon, which is to be understood as well literally as spiritually. But seeing it is so incredible a thing to the Saints, I conceive they will have but little minde to compare the Scriptures which speak of such a condition. And therefore, since it is the will of God to call me forth to make it forth more clearly, I do here gladly follow him.

In the first place, you may take notice of three particular estates which shall befal the Saints in this life, which may very well be rendered as a wilderness-condition; two of which are to be accomplished in spiritual Babylon, as Babylon may be rendered a State and a National Church; both which particulars concerning this wilderness, are to be understood in a spiritual sense. Now the Scripture to prove, is *Hosea* 2. 3. where God doth denounce his judgements against his people, in case they do not put away their adulteries from between their brest; and because they do not, the judgement follows, which is, to be stript naked, and set as in the day wherein she was born, in being made as a wilderness, and set as a dry land, and slain with Christ; and so it goes on to vers. 14. Now in this Scripture the condition of the Church of God is remarkably set forth, in respect of us who have committed spiritual adultery, as it is here spoken of at large. And so the first wilderness condition is accomplished in the last and dreadful desertion of the Church, immediately before her great and glorious deliverance out of mystical Babylon, which deliverance is as well temporal as spiritual, even from the bondage

of the creature, as in *Isai.* 9. 4. and 10.27. and then follows the wilderneſſe-condition, *Hoſ.* 2. from verſ. 14. to the end. We may ſee the like in *Iſa.*32. *Jer.* 30 and 31 Chap. I pray compare theſe Scriptures, which ſpeak of the wilderneſſe-condition that doth befal the Saints in this ſpiritual deſertion, when God hath bereft them of all.

Now there is another wilderneſſe-condition in reference to the Saints whilſt they are in Babylon, which is of another nature, as in *Revel.* 12, where there is mention made of the womans fleeing into the wilderneſſe: before ſhe hath wings given her, as is ſpoken in verſ. 14. to flee into the wilderneſſe in reſpect of a local ſeparation; which hath been the condition of the Saints ever ſince the defection from the Faith, for the ſpace of one thouſand two hundred and threeſcore days: but now it is accompliſhed in the condition of the Saints which have brought forth a man-childe; which man-childe is caught up to heaven, unto God and to his throne; which ſhews that the ſpiritual man in thoſe who are enlightned with that light of God, in whoſe light we ſee light; I ſay, the ſpiritual man in ſuch a one lives in God, though as we are in the fleſh, we are in Babylon, amongſt our hateful enemies: And ſo our being in God in this ſenſe, may be underſtood to be that wilderneſſe into which the woman flees immediately after ſhe hath brought forth a man-childe, where ſhe is kept in reſpect of her ſpiritual ſubſiſtence. And this we may likewiſe obſerve; ſhe is fled into this wilderneſſe before ſhe is perſecuted by the dragon, and ſo hath wings given her to flee away. And ſo I ſee that this wilderneſſe in a ſpiritual ſenſe may be ſaid to be God himſelf, as in *Iſai.* 33. when the Spirit ſhall be poured down from on high, even that wilderneſſe ſpoken of in *Hoſ.* 2. which we were made in our ſpiritual deſertion, ſhall be a fruitful field, and the fruitful field a foreſt.

Now having ſpoken of the wilderneſſe in the ſpiritual deſertion, and after the reſurrection into which the woman flees; now the main buſineſſe is to prove that the Lord will gather his people into a wilderneſſe, as a wilderneſſe is to be underſtood in the letter, when the Lord ſhall gather away his

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Saints in respect of a local separation from Babylon. Now the Scriptures to prove this, are as followeth: *Isa.*35. throwout; *Isa.*48. 20, 21. *Isa.*51. at the beginning; *Jer.* 31. 1, 2. *Ezek.*34.25. you may take notice of the whole Chapter; *Hos.* 2. from vers. 14. to the end; *Revel.* 12. 14. I pray compare these Scriptures.

And so with this I shall close up, nothing doubting but that the Lord will in his good time reveal unto his people those things which have been hidden from the beginning of the world, whilst that others shall promise to themselves peace and safety, when sudden destruction shall come upon them, as travel upon a woman with childe; but the Saints shall foresee the evil, and have an escape.

The Third Letter,

Concerning the Resurrection of the dead.

Dear Friends,

IT is the will of God to call me forth to heark what he shall say, and so accordingly to communicate it in the same givings forth of the Spirit, in that here I must make it known to you, before I can conceive it in my self. Now the main thing that God will speak by me at present, is concerning the condition of mankinde after natural death, and so likewise of the Resurrection of the body: and in this God doth condescend unto my weakness, in that some few hours since I did retain sad thoughts concerning the state of the Saints departed, with those who shall, before the glorious manifestation of Jesus Christ in the flesh, and so likewise of the redemption of the body; which redemption shall be as well temporal as spiritual. Now the faithful who are departed this life already, with those who shall before this glorious manifestation, it doth not appear that they do partake of that glory which they do who shall live unto that time, and if that we do not expect the resurrection of the body after the natural death.

Unto this I answer; Though we do not expect such a resurrection as formerly, yet we do expect a resurrection of the body mystical: for when some of the people of God (as in 1 *Cor.*15.) might object, according to their conceiving, as the Apostle speaks in that place, *Some may say, How are the dead raised, and With what bodies come they forth? Thou fool* (saith he)

he) *that which thou sowest is not quickned except it die*, as in verſ. 35. *and that which thou sowest, thou sowest not the body which shall be, but bare grain, it may be of wheat, or some other grain; but God giveth a body as it pleaseth him*: and so he goes on to verſ. 42. *so also is the resurrection of the dead: it is sown in corruption, and it is raised in incorruption; it is sown in dishonour, and raised in glory; it is sown in weakneſſe, and raised in power; it is sown a natural body, and raised a spiritual body. There is a natural body, and there is a spiritual body; as it is written, The first man Adam was made a living soul, and the second Adam was made a quickning spirit.* And so it follows unto verſ. 47 where it is said, *As we have born the image of the earthly, so we should bear the image of the heavenly*: that is, as we now bear the image of the earthly, that is, the image of Christ in the flesh; so we shall bear the image of the heavenly, Christ, who is said to be a quickning spirit: and here we are raised a spiritual body; for the body is Christ; and so the spiritual bodies of the Saints are not distinct one from another, but they make up the fulneſſe of God, and so this full God shall be manifested in the flesh of those Saints who shall live to the state of perfection: and so the resurrection of this corporal body, or *flesh and blood*, as well in a spiritual sense as literal, *cannot inherit the kingdom of God, neither can corruption inherit incorruption*: and so the Apostle saith, *Behold, I shew you a mystery; We shall not all die, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump*: and in *Isai.* it is called *the great trump* that shall sound, and then the dead in Christ rise; concerning which I have spoken in another place. So you see that these Scriptures do not concern the resurrection of the body after death, which death cannot properly be said to be death, in that the body is called a Tabernacle: now a Tabernacle cannot be said to die, onely it is dissolved; as the Apostle saith, *When this earthly tabernacle shall be dissolved, we have a house not made with hands, but eternal in the heavens.* And so natural death may be looked on as when a man puts off his clothes when he goes to rest: and the Apostle could desire not to be unclothed, that is, to put off this natural

tural body, but rather to live unto that time when the Saints shall be clothed upon, and mortality swallowed up of life. And so likewise the Scripture speaking of Christ, calls his flesh a *vail*, saying, *the vail, which was his flesh* : And so the natural body is onely a vail; and when this vail, which is the flesh, is put off, then man may be said to die, and then this vail, which is the body, returns to the earth, *and the spirit returns to God that gave it.* Now this shews that the reasonable soul which is in all mankinde, is God himself, who is in a wicked man as well as in the Saints; as the Apostle speaking to the Athenians, comprehends them amongst the off-spring of God, *Acts* 17.28 29. when he saith, *Forasmuch then as we are the off-spring of God, we ought not to think that the Godhead is like unto gold or silver.* Now though God may be said to be in a wicked man, Christ is not in any but those that are Christ's, those who are the sons and daughters of God Almighty, in whom God is manifested in the flesh : however, the Saints stand in the same relation to God their Father before the time of this glorious manifestation, as the Apostle saith, *We are the sons of God, but it doth not appear what we shall be : but when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is* : and when *to us a childe is born, to us a son is given, the government shall be upon his shoulder* : and in *Revel.* 12. that manchilde which is brought forth, as he is *caught up to God and to his throne*; so likewise he is to *rule all nations with a rod of iron.* Now this Son in *Isai.* 9. and this Man-childe in *Revel.* 12. and he that sits on the white horse in *Revel.* 19. 11. who is called *Faithful and True*; I say, that which is spoken of in these Scriptures concerning Christ, it is to be applied to every particular Saint, who are comprehended in the number of those that overcome, *Revel.* 2.20. where it is said, *He that overcometh, and keepeth my works unto the end, to him will I give power over the nations, and he shall rule them with a rod of iron; as the vessels of a potter shall they be broken to pieces, even as I have received of my Father; and I will give unto him the bright morning-Star.* So likewise *Psal.* 2. which speaks of that power which is given to the Saints, which is confined unto those

which

which shall overcome, which shall sit down with Christ in his throne, as in *Revel.*3.21. where it is said, *To him that overcometh, will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father on his throne.* Now when it is thus with the Saints, Christ ceaseth to be a Mediatour, in that the Saints are invested into the kingdom, and so declared mightily to be the sons of God, by the resurrection from the dead, and so have overcome hell and death, being risen with Christ, as in *Hos.*6.2, 3. and 13.14. *I will ransome them from the power of the grave, I will redeem them from death. O death, I will be thy plague; O grave, I will be thy destruction.* Now this ransome is an overcoming, in that it is said in the *Revelation*, that the Saints did overcome *by the word of God and the testimony of Jesus*, which is done in the glorious manifestation of Jesus Christ; and so we are in a capacity to keep the works of God unto the end. Now this may be understood divers ways, concerning which I cannot speak at present: But when the Saints shall thus overcome, they shall sit down with Christ in his throne, even as he overcame, and sate down in his Fathers throne. Now this Kingdom of Christ is distinct from the former, which was the Kingdom of Christ in the flesh, a Kingdom of Forms, a power over us; but this Kingdom throws down all forms and power over us, and all powers that were over us also in respect of the Ordinances, which vanish away when this Kingdom doth begin: and so likewise this Kingdom shall throw down all powers on earth, *Dan.*2.44 speaking there of the last powers, it is said, *In the days of these Kings shall the God of heaven set up a Kingdom which shall never be destroyed; and the Kingdom shall not be left to another people, but it shall break in pieces and consume all these Kingdoms, and stand for ever.* *Dan.*7.27, it is said, *The kingdom, and dominion, and the greatnesse of the kingdom under the whole heaven, shall be given to the people of the Saints of the most High, whose kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and all dominions shall serve and obey him*; which is the fulnesse of God, which comprehends all the Saints departed, which shall be manifested in flesh, which is that resurrection spoken of as before.

Now

Now this Kingdom which I have formerly ſpoken of, is begun in Babylon.

Now here I have made a digreſſion from the matter in hand, in that I muſt follow God: but now I am returned again, and ſo accordingly I ſhall ſpeak further concerning theſe particulars, according as God ſhall give in, which is concerning the ſtate of the body after natural death.

Now we all know, *as the tree falls, ſo it lieth*, and never riſeth again as to live: and that ſeed which is ſown, it dieth, and ceaſeth to be as it was; that ſame body never appeareth. And ſo when man dieth, his *body returneth unto the earth*, as in *Eccleſiaſtes*, and *Gen.*3.19, where it is ſaid, *In the ſweat of thy brows theu ſhalt eat bread, until thou return to the earth; for out of it waſt thou taken: for duſt thou art, and to duſt ſhalt thou return.*

Unto this ſome may object, *The creature is ranſomed from eternal death, by the redemption that was in Chriſt, in reſpect of the bodies remaining ever in the grave: for it is ſaid,* 1 Cor. 15, *that* As in Adam all die, ſo in Chriſt ſhall all be made alive: *So from this Scripture we do conclude there ſhall be a reſurrection of the body.*

Unto this I anſwer, There can no ſuch thing be gathered from this Scripture, 1 *Cor.* 15.22. for whereas it is ſaid, *As in Adam all die, ſo in Chriſt ſhall all be made alive*; this death and reſurrection is to be underſtood in a ſpiritual ſenſe, and not to be underſtood of the death and reſurrection of the body: for natural death cannot be ſaid ſimply to be death; and ſo the reſurrection of the natural body cannot be ſaid to be life; for if it were ſo, the bodies of the wicked may be ſaid to riſe to life, as well as the Saints: But death eternal is death, and life eternal is life: to be caſt into outer darkneſſe, where there is *weeping and gnaſhing of teeth*, and to be caſt out of the favour of God, this is death; and to live in God, who is love, and nothing but love, as the Apoſtle ſaith, *God is love*, and he that loves in live, liveth in God and God in him, this is life eternal, to know this God, and his Son, whom he hath raiſed from the dead; not onely to know that God hath raiſed Chriſt from

from the dead, but he hath raised me with Christ, and so destroyed death in me, which is the last enemy: in that we are risen with Christ, death and hell are destroyed in the spiritual man, and cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, which is the *second death*: now this *second death* belongs to none but the wicked, the Saints being altogether freed.

Now it may be demanded *What this lake of fire and brimstone is, and so consequently What is the second death from which the Saints are free.*

Unto this I answer; The *second death* is onely that horrour of Confusion which shall be in wicked men in the day of perdition, concerning which the Saints have some experience in the last and dreadful desertion, as in *Hos.* 13. 13, 14. from whence they are ransomed; and so in *Dan.* 12. 1. *Jer.* 30. beginning at vers. 5. *For thus saith the Lord, We have heard a noise of trembling, of fear, and not of peace. Ask ye now and see Whether a man doth travel with childe. Wherefore do I see every man With his hands on his loins as a woman in travel, and all faces are turned into paleness. Alas, for the day is great, and there is none like it: it is even the time of Jacobs trouble; but he shall be saved out of it.* And so it follows in vers. 8. which sheweth the full redemption of the Saints, as well in bodies temporal as spiritual.

Now death in a spiritual sense, is death; as to be cast out of the favour of God, *&c.* and this was the death that God did denounce to *Adam*, in the day that he did eat the forbidden fruit, *Gen.* 3. Now this death is not the natural death of the body; for that cannot be said to be death, as before it is spoken; but death in this sense as here, from the which death mankinde is ransomed, in that redemption that was in Christ: for now there is no hatred in God; for *God is love*; nay, he is love to his enemies, as our Saviour saith, *Love your enemies, that ye may be like your heavenly Father:* and God saith, *Anger is not in me*, as in *Isai.* for, should God be angry, the creature would be as stubble before consuming fire.

But then it may be objected, *If God be love to all, why are not all saved?*

I answer, Because God doth not manifest himself in his own nature unto any but those who are ordained to life, as in *Acts* 2. *As many as were ordained to life, believed.* So *Judas* said, *Why dost thou manifest thy self to us, and not unto the world?* And our Saviour said, *To you it is given to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven; but to them in parables, that they seeing might not see, and hearing might not conceive.* And the Apostle saith, that *Israel hath not attained what he sought for; but the election hath attained it, and the rest were hardened.* And so where God doth not manifest himself in the face of Jesus in the anointing, such a one continues in unbelief, and so *dead in trespasses and sins: and such were some of you,* as the Apostle saith, until we were washed and made clean by this anointing. And so those in whom this anointing, this Spirit of Jesus is, in whom Jesus Christ is come in the flesh, such a one *need not that any should teach him*; for, as the Apostle saith, the anointing teacheth him. And so as we are taught of God, so are we likewise freed from the bondage of the Law, and all Forms, nay Gospel-forms, as in *Isai.*10.27. where it is said, *It shall come to passe in that day, that his burden shall be taken off thy shoulder, and his yoke from off thy neck; and the yoke shall be destroyed because of the anointing.* And *Isai.*9. it is said, *Thou hast broken the yoke of the burden, the staff of the shoulder, and the rod of the oppressour, as in the days of Midian: for every battel of the warriour is of confused noise, and with tumbling garments in blood; but this shall be with burning, and with fuel of fire:* and the reason is given, *For to us a Childe is born, to us a Son is given; the government shall be upon his shoulder,* as vers. 6, 17. and then we are freed from all servitude, as well temporal as spiritual; for there shall be no *grieving brier* nor *pricking thorn*; the whole creation shall be subject to the Saints, and *they shall rule over their oppressours: Isai.* 65.15. *Behold, my servants shall sing for joy of heart, but you shall howl for vexation of spirit; and ye shall leave your Name for a curse to my chosen.* And it follows, vers.7. *Behold, I create new heavens and a new earth; the former shall not be remembred, nor come into minde: but be you glad and rejoyce for ever in that I create:*

for

for behold, I create Jerusalem a rejoycing, and her people a joy; and the voice of weeping shall be no more heard in her, nor the voice of crying. And so it follows to vers. 23. where it is said, *They shall not labour in vain, nor bring forth in trouble:* and in vers. 25. *The Wolf and the lamb shall feed together*; which shews the glory of the Saints in this life, and their freedom from servitude. When it is thus, we are no more subject to any Law, but the *law of liberty*; and so we are made *kings and priests to God*, to offer up spiritual sacrifice, when the Lord shall have thus purified the *sons of Levi* by this anointing, that they may bring an offering to him in righteousnesse, as in *Mal.* 3. Here I have made a digression.

But now if God will put words into my mouth, I shall speak as concerning the resurrection of the body, and the state of mankinde after natural death.

Now in the first place, it is clear in Scripture that there is no resurrection of the natural body; but that resurrection spoken of, is the resurrection of the body mystical, which is to be understood in two particulars.

First, a resurrection in this life out of a spiritual desertion, as I have formerly spoken of at large.

Now there is another resurrection of the mystical body, in respect of the Saints departed, concerning which Christ speaks to *Martha*, when she did answer to our Saviour according as the people of God do now adays, as they do conceive of spiritual mysteries: But when our Saviour said unto her, *Thy brother shall rise again*; she replied, *I know that he shall rise again at the resurrection at the last day.* But here we may observe, though our Saviour doth not contradict *Martha* in plain terms, yet he speaks quite contrary to her conceivings: for (saith he) *I am the resurrection and the life: Whosoever believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live; and whosoever liveth and believeth in me, shall never die.* So that from this it is clear, that death natural is not death, and the resurrection of the natural body is not life, because we know by experience that the people of God that live, and believe in Jesus, do die a natural death. And so this resurrection spoken of in Scri-

pture is to be underſtood in a ſpiritual ſenſe, as in the firſt place a reſurrection out of a ſpiritual deſertion, which the death and reſurrection of Chriſt did typifie, as now that Chriſt ſuffered as our ſurety, and ſo as a ſinner: and though he was put to death in the body, yet he did not die as other men, but onely lay down his body: for it was ſaid of him, that God wou'd not leave hi ſoul in grave, neither ſuffer his body to ſee corruption: for, *he laid down his life, to take it up again.*

Now as Chriſt was ſlain by our ſin, as our ſurety; ſo we are ſlain by our iniquities in a ſpiritual ſenſe, as it was ſpoken of *Ephraim*, *Hoſ.* 13. 1. to the 15.

And not onely doth the reſurrection of Chriſt typifie the reſurrection of the Saints out of ſpiritual deſertion, as in *Iſa.* 26. and *Hoſ.* 6. but the reſurrection of Chriſt did typifie the reſurrection of the whole myſtical body after natural death, as before ſpoken. And likewiſe it is ſaid, when Chriſt comes in glory, *all the Saints are gathered together from the four Windes*; which ſhews a general reſurrection, as well of thoſe that are depart d, as thoſe which ſhall be alive at that time. And in *Dan.* 7. it is ſaid, when the *ancient of days* did ſit, *thouſands and thouſands ſtood before him, and ten thouſand times ten thouſand did miniſter unto him.* Now, as I have formerly ſaid, this is not to be underſtood of the natural body, but the reſurrection of the myſtical body compleat in one.

Now having ſpoken of the reſurrection of the Saints after their natural death; I ſhall now, God aſſiſting, ſpeak concerning the ſtate of the wicked, according as God ſhall give it in to me.

As the glory and joy of the Saints in heaven is unſpeakable, concerning which, *Eye hath not ſeen, nor ear heard, neither hath it at any time entered into the heart of man to conceive*; which now *is revealed to us by the Spirit*, though it cannot be apprehended in the carnal ſenſe, as we are fleſh: ſo on the contrary, that horrour of conſcience and torment which ſhall be in the wicked, is likewiſe unſpeakable: For when a wicked man dies in reſpect of his natural death, that ſpirit of God which is in a wicked man, returns to God again; and ſo God and the

wicked

wicked man is ſeparated for ever and ever; and ſo God ceaſeth to be Love as to them, and the creature is given up unto the devil, to be tormented to all eternity; which torment begins in the day of judgement and perdition of wicked and ungodly men; and ſo it is clear in Scripture, the wicked are not to be tormented until that time: for a ſpirit is not capable of torment, but when it is in the body; and ſo the ſpirit of the devil that is in a wicked man, ſhall remain unto all eternity. And as in the *day of judgement and perdition of wicked men*, there ſhall be a ſeparation between the ſheep and the goats, the Saints and the Wicked; even ſo likewiſe ſhall Chriſt appear, *and all his Saints with him*, which make but one incomprehenſible God, one Body, which is Chriſt: ſo this incomprehenſible God, this Chriſt, the manifeſtation of the Father, ſhall appear in thoſe living Saints, who ſhall live ſucceſſively, and ſo this glorious manifeſtation ſhall come in more and more, until the incomprehenſible God be comprehended in the Saints. And then when it is thus, *the body ſhall be clothed upon, and mortality ſhall be ſwallowed up of light*, and theſe very bodies of fleſh ſhall be annihilated and brought to nothing. Now as this glorious manifeſtation of God ſhall appear in the fleſh of the Saints, which is that reſurrection ſpoken of, in that we are raiſed a *ſpiritual body*: ſo on the contrary, all the infernal ſpirits which have acted in the ſpirits of the children of diſobedience from the beginning of the world, ſhall be comprehended in one body, which is a ſpiritual body likewiſe, the ſpirit of the devils: and ſo all theſe infernal ſpirits being comprehended in one, ſhall be manifeſted in the fleſh of the wicked, when God ſhall ſay, *Go ye curſed into utter darkneſſe, where there ſhall be weeping and gnaſhing of teeth world without end*: For, *the worm ſhall never die, and the fire ſhall never be quenched*. And ſo it is clear from Scripture, that all the infernal ſpirits ſhall be tormented in the bodies of the wicked who ſhall live until the day of Judgement, becauſe, as I have formerly ſaid, a ſpirit is not capable of torment, but a ſpirit is capable of joy, concerning which we have a cloud of witneſſes in the Scriptures, in what God hath

revealed

revealed to his people. And now to this we shall finde that the devil speaks to Christ in those who were possest, which came out of the graves, very fierce, who cried out, *What have we to do with thee, O Jesus the Son of God? art thou come to torment us before the time?* And from this Scripture, the bodies of the wicked, whose time of torment shall be when God hath destroyed death and hell in his Saints, which is all darkness, all fear and terrour, all vexation of spirit which the Saints are subject to before the glorious manifestation: but when God shall appear thus in his Saints, then hell and death which remain yet in the flesh after the beginning of this manifestation, though the spiritual man be destroyed, shall be cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, which is the second death: and so the Saints may be said to torment the wicked, as the devil spake to Christ: which time of judgement is not yet begun; but when the Lord shall give a deliverance unto all his people, both from the spiritual bondage, and out of the spiritual desertion, then begins this hell to the devil and his angels, which shall be in the bodies of the wicked, as in *Zech.* 14. 12. *Isai.* 66. last.

With this I shall close up this Discourse, committing both you and this unto that God who will bring to light those things which have been a long time hidden in darkness; nay, he will make known that which hath been kept secret from the beginning of the world; not onely that which was made known to the Prophets of old, and the Apostles, who saw no further then the letter onely, that which God did reveal unto them by the Spirit, which was to be accomplished in that age: for they did onely see Christ in the flesh, and so they did see Christ as thorow a vail, and accordingly they did expect more glorious manifestations which should appear to them who live unto the time of the glorious appearing of the second coming of Christ; which manifestation doth now begin to some, in whom the day-Star doth appear.

So I shall ever remain yours in Christ,

Elizabeth Avery.

FINIS.